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SUBJECT: BURKINA FASO: ANTI-CORRUPTION HIGH AUTHORITY DELIVERS FINAL REPORT

REF: OUAGADOUGOU 20

¶1. On June 3, the Burkinabe Anti-Corruption High Authority (HACLC) submitted to Prime Minister Tertius Zongo its 2007 report on the status of corruption in Burkina Faso. The report was the fifth and last of its kind as the HACLC is merging with two other anti-corruption agencies to create the Authority of State Control (ASCE) (reftel). (Note: The HACLC was established in 2001, but started operating in earnest in 2003. End note).

¶2. Although the HACLC report is not for public release, HACLC President Alphonse Malobaly Traore presented highlights of it to the press recently, including its conclusion that corruption in Burkina Faso is alarming widespread, particularly in the civil service. Traore commended the establishment of the ASCE and hoped that, because of its financial independence, authority to make public its reports, and ability to refer cases to the judicial system for possible prosecution, it would be more effective than the HACLC.

Meager Resources Yielded Meager Results

¶3. Traore continued his comments to the press, deploring his agency's small operating budget of only 89 million CFA or around 212 thousand USD. He added that, in spite of limited resources, the HACLC had conducted communication and training campaigns on corruption throughout the country. In one small triumph on December 14, 2007, the HACLC transmitted to the Prime Minister 15 cases related to corruption and other types of financial misappropriation that amounted to more than 22 billion CFA (52 million USD).

Prime Minister Zongo Promises to Combat Corruption

¶4. At the same press event, Prime Minister Zongo acknowledged that corruption was one of the biggest obstacles to development, and a major concern for the government, civil society, and development partners. Zongo understood the long road ahead in the fight against corruption and reaffirmed his strong resolve to strengthen the ASCE and other auditing and anti-corruption entities. He noted that state general inspection and legal authorities, for example, had been conducting further investigations. Zongo gave assurances that all institutions and individuals incriminated in the 15 corruption cases presented to him in 2007 were being called in for questioning.

JACKSON